

RESEARCH NOTES

THE GLOSSY IBISES OF LAKE ALICE.—Eastern glossy ibises, *Plegadis falcinellus*, are widely distributed in the Old World, but in the New World they have only occasionally been found nesting at a few scattered localities in Puerto Rico, Hispaniola, Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, Texas and South Carolina. In Florida there are four nesting colonies, at King's Bar, in Lake Okeechobee; at Lake Washington, in the upper St. Johns River marshes; at Rabbit Island, in Lake Kissimmee; and at Lake Alice, Alachua County. In view of the rarity of these birds in the New World, these observations on the present status of the Lake Alice colony are presented.

The glossy ibises which nest at Lake Alice are apparently descended from the ones which nested at Orange Lake from 1909 to 1916 (Baynard, 1913, Wilson Bull., 25: 103-117; Howell, 1932, Florida Bird Life, p. 116); a maximum of nine pairs nested at that locality. In 1937 these ibises had moved to Bivin's Arm, and at least 106 were present, but only 33 remained to nest (Russell, 1937, Fla. Nat., 10: 80-82). In 1941, eight pairs nested there (Mills, 1941, Fla. Nat., 14: 73-74). In 1947 only four glossy ibises were seen (Mills, 1947, Fla. Nat., 20: 44). In 1948 the glossy ibises, along with the herons and white ibises, moved to Lake Alice to nest. Karraker (1953, The Birds of Lake Alice, M.S. Thesis, Univ. of Fla.) reported about 50 glossy ibises there in 1951, and about 30 in 1952. My own observations at Lake Alice cover the years 1953, 1954, and 1955.

In 1953 I first saw the glossy ibises on 14 March, when 13 arrived at the rookery with the evening flight of herons and ibises. Subsequent counts revealed that a maximum of 29 glossy ibises were roosting at the rookery in the spring and early summer. Several nests with young glossy ibises were found, but I do not believe that all of the birds nested.

In 1954 I first saw glossy ibises on 25 March, when ten were present. A maximum of 18 used the rookery up until 5 May. After that date there was a steady increase in number until a peak of 59 was reached on 10 July. Many of these birds were in adult plumage, so the increase was not due entirely to the fledgling of young birds, although a fairly large number of nests were found that summer. The last glossy ibises were seen on 26 August.

In 1955 I did not see any glossy ibises until 4 April, when only six roosted in the rookery. However, there was a sharp increase in numbers, and on 16 April 65 glossy ibises arrived at the rookery in the evening flight. Nesting had begun on 29 April. This colony, despite its small size and isolation from other colonies, seems to be maintaining itself.—Dale W. Rice, Department of Biology, University of Florida.